

IN THE CLAIMS

Please replace the claim listing with the following:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A fuel conditioning method for internal combustion engines of motor vehicles, comprising:

passing nitrous gases through liquid fuel of a motor vehicle at a temperature of from 20°C to 150°C and at atmospheric pressure, the nitrous gases consisting essentially of at least one of nitrogen monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, dinitrogen monoxide, and gaseous mixtures thereof, nitro compounds being formed in the fuel as a result of the passing of the nitrous gases through the fuel.

Claim 2 (original): The method as recited in Claim 1 wherein the nitrous gases are passed through the fuel in an atmosphere rich in oxygen or nitrogen.

Claim 3 (currently amended): A method for operating a catalytic converter and conditioning fuel for an internal combustion engine of a motor vehicle comprising:~~The method as recited in Claim 1 further comprising~~ producing the nitrous gases using a storage-type catalytic converter, the nitrous gases consisting essentially of at least one of nitrogen monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, dinitrogen monoxide, and gaseous mixtures thereof, the catalytic converter adsorbing the nitrogen monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, dinitrogen monoxide or gaseous mixtures thereof from exhaust gas of ~~an~~ the internal combustion engine of the motor vehicle for concentration and desorbing the nitrogen monoxide, nitrogen dioxide dinitrogen monoxide or gaseous mixtures; ~~and thereof prior to the passing step.~~

passing the nitrous gases formed in the producing step through liquid fuel of the motor vehicle at a temperature of from 20°C to 150°C and at atmospheric pressure, nitro compounds being formed in the fuel as a result of the passing of the nitrous gases through the fuel.

Claim 4 (original): The method as recited in Claim 1 further comprising passing a partial flow of exhaust gas from an internal combustion engine of the motor vehicle through the fuel.

Claim 5 (original): A method for conditioning fuel and starting an internal combustion engine of a motor vehicle comprising the steps of:~~The method as recited in Claim 1~~ further comprising passing nitrous gases through liquid fuel of the motor vehicle at a temperature of from 20°C to 150°C and at atmospheric pressure, the nitrous gases consisting essentially of at least one of nitrogen monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, dinitrogen monoxide, and gaseous mixtures thereof, nitro compounds being formed in the fuel as a result of the passing of the nitrous gases through the fuel; and
using the fuel after the passing step in a cold-start phase of the ~~an~~ internal combustion engine of the motor vehicle.

Claim 6 (original): The method as recited in Claim 1 wherein a light-off temperature of exhaust gas aftertreatment catalysts is reduced via the treated fuel.

Claim 7 (original): The method as recited in Claim 1 wherein the fuel includes at least one of gasoline, Diesel fuel, kerosene and alcohol.

Claim 8 (original): The method as recited in Claim 1 further comprising using heat of at least one of a cooling system and heating system of the motor vehicle for controlling a temperature of the method.